

II.—A VARIETY OF *BUTEA FRONDOSA*.

WITH the month of March the glory of the Pallas (*Butea frondosa*) is rapidly passing away. Before it disappears entirely I should like to bring to the notice of the Society a curious and beautiful sport of the tree which is to be occasionally seen in this neighbourhood. It is very rare, and I have personally seen only one tree in hundreds of miles travel, but I have heard that others exist. Instead of the dazzling blaze of orange with which we are all so familiar, this tree blossoms into a pale yellow. The basis of the petals are primrose yellow, and they shade off to a creamy tint on the edges and on their reverse sides. The corolla contrasts every beautifully with its rich olive-brown downy calyx. Except in the colour of the corolla, the tree seems to be in all respects precisely the same as the common Pallas. It is the first of the kind I have seen after 20 years' residence in India, and it is certainly very uncommon, for the books do not mention it.

I have six seedlings of last rains in my gardens from seeds reputed to have been gathered from a yellow tree.

H. T. OMMANNEY,

Bo. C. S.

Godhra, Panch Mahals, 1st March, 1891.

III.—HARPOONING CROCODILES.

CAPTAIN G. SUTTON-JONES, of the Deoli Irregular Force, who is a keen sportsman, sends us an account of the method adopted by him of destroying crocodiles in village tanks. The presence of these loathsome reptiles in village tanks and reservoirs is, as far as we know, productive of nothing but evil, as they are most destructive to the fish and wild fowl, and not infrequently drag goats and even children into the water.

Captain Sutton-Jones writes as follows:—

“The rainfall in these parts being far below the average, the water in the tanks is clear, and in few instances more than eight feet in depth. I was accompanied by Captain Penrose, of my Regiment, our chief intention being to shoot in the neighbouring jungles, and we only spent an hour or two with the crocodiles in the morning and evening before and after shooting.

“The *modus operandi* was simple. Our harpoon had a movable head, with a ring at the end, to which about 50 yards of rope were attached and coiled neatly in the boat (a small flat-bottomed iron punt). The shaft of the harpoon was a well-seasoned bamboo about 10 feet in length. Our shikari was a man of the ‘Keer’ or fisherman caste, by name Gopala. One of us accompanied Gopala in the boat and punted quietly about the tank, carefully looking amongst the openings in the weeds for the crocodiles which we found lying at the bottom of the water in fancied security. It was an easy matter to drive the harpoon into the reptile and to withdraw the bamboo shaft. It was then necessary to retreat quickly, as a pair of snapping jaws came up to the surface ready to seize anything.

While we punted away the crocodiles invariably brought about their own destruction, by entangling themselves in the weeds until they were unable to move. Finding that we could not haul them into the boat, we landed and dragged them out on to the shore, when a shot in the neck put an end to their misery.

“Occasionally the crocodiles would see the boat approaching them and make off as fast as they could along the bottom. It was most exciting work then punting after them. It frequently happened that as soon as we caught them up they would purposely stir up the mud at the bottom, so that we could not see them.

“We managed to get 18 crocodiles in this way, out of two tanks, but in no case did they exceed 9 feet in length. They were all the ordinary thick-snouted Crocodile or Muggur (*Crocodilus palustris*).

“The harpoon we used was of this description :—



“If it struck against the scales or plates on the back of the reptiles, the harpoon would not penetrate, but in no case did a crocodile succeed in getting off after the spear-head had once been well driven in near the hind or fore quarters.”

IV.—A MAN-EATING PANTHER.

I BEG to forward three fingers of a boy of about 12 years of age, found in the stomach of a man-eating panther, shot on the 13th of last month. He was the only son of a Banjari woman, who with some 10 or 12 others, had put up in the open for the night, on her way to the Nizam's Dominions, in a tigerish-looking country, surrounded by hills covered with brushwood. It had rained a little during the first part of the night, and the party did not, though fatigued after their journey, get to sleep till after midnight. Shortly after, the mother was disturbed by feeling the covering over her boy roughly dragged away, and, missing her son, who had gone to sleep by her side, raised an alarm, but the intense darkness of the night, and in absence of a light, rendered anything like a successful search impossible; and nothing remained for the poor mother, stunned with the horrible fear of what had happened, but to wait for the break of day, which, to her, came slowly indeed, and when it did come, afforded no relief, but brought with it the confirmation of her worst fears that her son had been carried off. Spots of blood here and there, and the marks on the grass of a heavy dragging of a body, simplified the tracking, that was taken up by a local shikarry; and in the dry bed of a small mountain stream, close by, the skull was found stripped of its flesh and hair. Further and